

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9544

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 12646

EXDIS

E.O. 11652:

TAGS: PFOR, MPOL, MARR, NATO, US, FR

SUBJECT: SECRETARY-GISCARD BILATERAL MAY 27 - TALKING

POINTS: EUROPEAN DEFENSE

REF: (A) PARIS 12560; (B) PARIS 12231 (EXDIS); (C) LUX-
EMBOURG 350 (EXDIS)

1. SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND: IN ADDITION TO THE TALKING POINTS FOR THE BILATERAL MEETING BETWEEN THE SECRETARY AND GISCARD DESCRIBED IN REF A, I BELIEVE THERE IS ANOTHER SUBJECT THAT COULD BE PROFITABLY DISCUSSED WITH GISCARD: EUROPEAN DEFENSE. IN RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH ME BOTH DEFENSE MINISTER BOURGES (REF B) AND PRIME MINISTER CHIRAC HAVE ALLUDED TO THEIR INTEREST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A EUROPEAN DEFENSE ARRANGEMENT INVOLVING "AUTONOMOUS" MILITARY CAPABILITIES AND "INDEPENDENCE" OF DECISION. EACH ARGUED THAT EUROPE'S EFFORTS TO ORGANIZE ITS OWN DEFENSE ALONG THESE LINES WOULD SERVE U.S. INTERESTS BECAUSE AN "AUTONOMOUS/INDEPENDENT" EUROPEAN DEFENSE WOULD PROVIDE A STRONG AND RELIABLE EUROPEAN PARTNER FOR THE UNITED STATES. I DO NOT BELIEVE THEY ENVISION THIS AS A MEANS TO REINTEGRATE FRANCE INTO NATO. QUITE THE CONTRARY, THEIR CCMMMENTS CONCERNING "AUTONOMOUS/INDEPENDENT" EUROPEAN DEFENSE SUGGEST THAT THE GOF MAY BE TURNING ITS ATTENTION ONCE AGAIN TOWARD SOME FORM OF AN INDEPENDENT EUROPEAN DEFENSE STRUCTURE, A DEVELOP-

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MENT THAT COULD RUPTURE THE TRANSATLANTIC SOLIDARITY ON

WHICH NATO MUST REST AND WHICH -- IN MY OPINION -- MUST
REMAIN THE CEMENT THAT BINDS TOGETHER OUR COMMITMENT TO
THE DEFENSE OF EUROPE AND THE EFFORTS OF THE EUROPEANS
TO CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR OWN DEFENSE. NO MATTER HOW WELL
MOTIVATED, ATTEMPTS BY SOME EUROPEANS TO LOOK TO NON-NATO
FORUMS (E.G., EC-NINE, WEU) AS A POTENTIAL FRAMEWORK FOR
EUROPEAN DEFENSE ARE UNLIKELY TO PROVE ATTRACTIVE TO THE
FRENCH EXCEPT INsofar AS THEY WOULD PERMIT THE GOF TO BUY
INTO EUROPEAN DEFENSE ON FRENCH TERMS AND IN WAYS THAT
INEVITABLY WOULD DILUTE NATO SOLIDARITY. THE EUROGROUP,
ON THE OTHER HAND, OFFERS THE FRENCH A "EUROPEAN" FORUM
THAT IS COMPATIBLE WITH ALLIANCE SOLIDARITY. A FIRM
US-EUROGROUP AGREEMENT TO COOPERATE ON MILITARY HARDWARE
R&D AND PRODUCTION WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR THE FRENCH TO
RESIST. IF THE FRENCH COULD BE LOCKED INTO THIS ASPECT
OF THE EUROGROUP, OUR EUROGROUP ALLIES WOULD STAND A
BETTER CHANCE OF REINTEGRATING FRANCE INTO EUROPEAN
DEFENSE UNDER THE NATO UMBRELLA. IF THAT IS SCHMIDT'S
MESSAGE (AS REPORTED IN REF C), WE SHOULD SUPPORT IT.
IN ALL CANDOR, HOWEVER, I CANNOT REPORT ANY GISCARDIAN
GROUND SWELL OF REAL ENTHUSIASM FOR THE EUROGROUP, EXCEPT
PERHAPS AS A TACTICAL MEANS TO THE END OF WINNING THE
F-104 SUCCESSOR COMPETITION. IN ANY EVENT, WE SHOULD
LEAVE THE FRENCH IN NO DOUBT OF OUR FIRM VIEW THAT
ATTEMPTS TO ORGANIZE EUROPEAN DEFENSE MULTILATERALLY
OUTSIDE OF NATO WILL PROVOKE THE STRONGEST U.S. OPPOSI-
TION. I SUGGEST THAT THE SECRETARY DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT

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WITH GISCARD, PERHAPS ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES:

2. TALKING POINTS:

-- WE ARE CONVINCED THAT OVERALL WESTERN SECURITY WOULD BE SUBSTANTIALLY ENHANCED BY MORE ACTIVE AND DIRECT PARTICIPATION BY FRANCE IN THE SECURITY ASPECTS OF NATO. WE RECCGNIZE THE POLITICAL PROBLEMS THAT MAY CIRCUMSCRIBE GISCARD'S FREEDOM OF ACTION IN THIS REGARD. WE WANT TO EXPLORE, HOWEVER, HOW FRANCE CAN PLAY A GREATER ROLE IN ALLIANCE DEFENSE, COMPATIBLE WITH THESE DOMESTIC RESTRAINTS.

-- WITHIN NATO, THE EUROGROUP PROVIDES THE EMBRYO OF A EUROPEAN DEFENSE ELEMENT THAT COULD EVENTUALLY BECOME AN EQUAL PARTNER WITH THE UNITED STATES IN THE PROTECTION OF OUR MUTUAL SECURITY. WE WOULD WELCOME FRANCE'S ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE WORK OF THE EUROGROUP, ALTHOUGH WE FULLY RECOGNIZE THAT THIS SUBJECT IS BEST LEFT TO DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE MEMBERS OF THE EUROGROUP AND FRANCE.

-- RELATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE EUROGROUP IN COMING YEARS MAY PROVE TO BE AN IMPORTANT MECHANISM FOR AVOIDING POTENTIAL IRRITATIONS IN US-EUROPEAN MILITARY RELATIONS, FOR EXAMPLE CONCERNING DEVELOPMENT AND PROCUREMENT OF WEAPONS SYSTEMS. FULL FRENCH PARTICIPATION IN EUROGROUP MIGHT DIMINISH A FUTURE DIFFICULTIES
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THAT COULD AFFECT CERTAIN OF UR RELATIONS, SUCH AS THE F-104 SUCCESSOR
SUBJECT.

-- THE FRENCH MUST UNDERSTAND, HOWEVER, THAT OUR FIRM AND UNSWERVING DEVOTION TO NATO MEANS THAT WE WOULD LOOK WITH STRONG DISFAVOR ON ANY EFFORT TO PURSUE THE MULTILATERAL DEFENSE OF EUROPE THROUGH ORGANIZATIONS THAT MIGHT COMPETE WITH NATO AND THAT WOULD RISK DILUTING THE MUTUAL CONFIDENCE UPON WHICH NATO SECURITY MUST REST.
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